

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 TRSE-00 AID-05 CIAE-00  
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AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
AMEMBASSY QUITO  
CINCSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 10215

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, SHUM, CI, UN  
SUBJECT: PINOCHET CALLS FOR "NATIONAL CONSULTATION" IN RESPONSE  
TO UNGA RESOLUTION

REF: SANTIAGO 10128

1. SUMMARY: THE HIGHLIGHT OF PRESIDENT PINOCHET'S ADDRESS OF DECEMBER 21 WAS A CALL FOR "A NATIONAL CONSULTATION" TO DETERMINE WHETHER CHILEANS SUPPORT HIM AND HIS POLICIES OR AGREE WITH THE UN'S CHILE RESOLUTION. AT NOON DECEMBER 22 THE GOC ANNOUNCED THAT ALL CHILEANS WILL BE REQUIRED TO VOTE ON THE ISSUE JANUARY 4. OVERALL, THE TONE OF THE ADDRESS WAS LESS ANTAGONISTIC THAN EXPECTED. PINOCHET ALLUDED TO THE US BUT NOT BY NAME. HE FORECLOSED NO OPTIONS WITH THE UN AND HE LAID DOWN NO SANCTIONS AGAINST DOMESTIC CRITICS.  
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PINOCHET IS TAKING A RISK IN DEMANDING A NATIONAL VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. THE PHRASING OF THE ISSUE IS LOADED BUT EVEN SO HE MAY NOT GET OVERWHELMING SUPPORT. BY HOLDING A "PLEBISCITE" HE IS UNDERMINING THE GOC'S LONGSTANDING CONTENTION THAT VOTING MECHANICS PRECLUDE AN EARLY RETURN TO ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SPEECH: PINOCHET DEVOTED MOST OF HIS TALK TO A MEASURED

PRESENTATION OF CHILE'S POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE UN: THE BIASED ALLANA GROUP MEDDLES IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS; THE UN APPLIES A UNIQUE STANDARD TO CHILE. THE UN RESOLUTION, SAID PINOCHET, REALLY AIMS AT OVER-THROWING THE GOC. IT PREPARES THE GROUND FOR ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST CHILE AND FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION. WHILE THE GOC HAS ALWAYS RECOGNIZED AN INTERNATIONAL ROLE WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS, SUPPLEMENTING SOVEREIGN RESPONSIBILITY, IT WILL HAVE TO REASSESS ITS POSITION OF COLLABORATION WITH THE UN SHOULD THE PRESENT SITUATION CONTINUE.

3. PINOCHET SAID THAT THE GOC HAD EXPECTED THE SOVIETS, THROUGH THE CUBANS, TO CONDEMN CHILE. BUT (CLEARLY WITH THE US IN MIND): "HOW TO EXPLAIN WHY THOSE UNDERTAKING A WORLD CRUSADE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, INSTEAD OF FAVORING THE APPLICATION OF EQUITABLE PROCEDURES RESPECTING DUE PROCESS, CHOOSE TO ABET A JUDGMENT AGAINST CHILE IGNORING SUCH PRINCIPLES AND TO WORK CLOSELY WITH CASTRO'S CUBA?"

4. PINOCHET ALSO CONTRASTED THE STRICT PROCEDURES LAID OUT BY THE WESTERN EUROPEANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS CLAIMS AMONG THEMSELVES WITH THEIR ACTIONS IN THE UN ON CHILE. HE WARNED THE THIRD WORLD IN UNUSUALLY EXPLICIT TERMS, TO NOTE CAREFULLY THE CHILEAN PRECEDENT SINCE THEY COULD FIND THEMSELVES VICTIMS IN THE FUTURE. HE HAD KIND WORDS FOR THOSE LATIN AMERICANS AND OTHERS SUPPORTING THE GOC POSITION. ON THE OTHER HAND HE HAD HARSH WORDS FOR CHILEANS KNOWINGLY OR UNKNOWNLY HELPING THE COMMUNISTS: "CERTAIN GROUPS AFFIRM DEMOCRATIC IDEALS AND EVEN CHRISTIAN INSPIRATION, BUT THEIR IGNOBLE, VILE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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UNPATRIOTIC CONDUCT IS WHAT LEADS MANY GOVERNMENTS TO THE WRONG APPRECIATION OF CHILEAN REALITY".

5. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WOULD ASK ALL CHILEANS OVER THE AGE OF 18 TO PARTICIPATE IN A "NATIONAL CONSULTATION". HE CLOSED WITH A CALL FOR CHILEANS TO RALLY AROUND THE FLAG.

6. THE VOTE: AT NOON DECEMBER 22 THE GOC ANNOUNCED THE TERMS OF THE CONSULTATION. ALL CHILEANS OVER AGE 18 (PROBABLY INCLUDING ILLITERATES

AND EXCLUDING ONLY THOSE TOO INFIRM TO GO TO THE POLLS AND THOSE INVOLVED IN CRIMINAL CASES) WILL BE OBLIGED TO VOTE IN THE JURISDICTION

THEY FIND THEMSELVES ON JANUARY 4. NATIONAL IDENTITY CARDS WILL BE USED TO OBTAIN A BALLOT AND MARKED TO SHOW THAT THE HOLDER HAS VOTED. THE QUESTION: "FACED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL AGGRESSION UNLEASHED AGAINST OUR GOVERNMENT I SUPPORT PRESIDENT PINOCHET IN HIS DEFENSE OF

THE DIGNITY OF CHILE, AND I REAFFIRM THE LEGITIMACY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC TO CONDUCT WITH SOVEREIGN INDEPENDENCE OUR INSTITUTIONALIZATION PROCESS. YES OR NO?"

5. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT ALL PROVISIONS OF THE STATE OF SIEGE WILL CONTINUE IN EFFECT, EMPHASIZING PARTICULARLY PROHIBITIONS ON POLITICAL ACTIVITY.

3. COMMENT: AT FIRST BLUSH, PINOCHET APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN AN AMAZING RISK. FACED WITH THE QUESTION AS PRESENTED, IT IS LIKELY THAT AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF CHILEANS WILL VOTE "YES". BUT WHAT WILL PINOCHET PROVE? CRITICS HAVE BEEN GIVEN FERTILE GROUND. THE ISSUE BEING PUT TO VOTE HAS BEEN BLATANTLY LOADED. THERE IS NO TIME FOR CONSIDERED DISCUSSION. THE GOC, MAINTAINING EMERGENCY POWERS, PROHIBITS OPEN "POLITICAL" DEBATE. AT THE SAME TIME, BY GOING THE PLEBISCITE OR "NATIONAL CONSULTATION" ROUTE, PINOCHET IS UNDERMINING A BASIC SUPPORT OF HIS PLANS FOR A DRAWN-OUT TRANSITION PERIOD. IF THE EXISTING CARNET SYSTEM, WITH ALL ITS IMPERFECTIONS, IS HELD UP AS CONFIDENTIAL

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A MEANINGFUL BASIS FOR THE PURPOSE OF SHOWING NATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE MILITARY REGIME, IT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT TO ARGUE THAT A FULL RETURN TO ELECTORAL PROCESSES MUST BE INDEFINITELY POSTPONED. IN SHORT, RATHER THAN CONVINCING THE CRITICS HERE AND ABROAD, PINOCHET IS LIKELY TO GIVE THEM ANOTHER ARGUMENT. ACCORDINGLY, THE OPPOSITION, WHILE DISCOUNTING THE VOTE IN ADVANCE, PROBABLY VIEWS IT AS A POSITIVE STEP.

9. WE NOTE FOR THE RECORD THAT PINOCHET MADE ONE SIGNIFICANT CHANGE FROM HIS PREPARED TEXT (COPIES OF WHICH USIS WAS ABLE TO OBTAIN THREE HOURS BEFORE BROADCAST). PINOCHET DELETED A PARAGRAPH WHICH WOULD HAVE INVITED THE UNITED NATIONS TO ACCREDIT OBSERVERS TO THE JANUARY 4. VOTE, AND WHICH ALSO PROMISED FREE ACCESS TO THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS.

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